

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.
2. Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-12, 14-20, 22, 24-28, 30-34, 36 and 37 are pending and have been examined.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Bryan Kirkpatrick on 1-4-2011

The application has been amended as follows:

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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 11, 12 and 31 as shown below:

11. An apparatus comprising a storage device for storing computer files, wherein the apparatus is configured to:

obtain a steganographic signature by reading a partial section of executable code of a program, wherein the program includes software calls that introduce steganographic items into a computer file;

identify one or more computer files, other than the program, comprising software code; obtain one or more test signatures by reading partial sections of the software code;

compare the steganographic signature with the one or more test signatures to identify when a match with the steganographic signature is found; and

in response to identifying when the match is found, ~~indicate~~ display a listing of which of the one or more computer files has been modified by the program.

12. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the ~~indication~~ listing incorporates an identification of the steganographic signature.

31. A non-transitory computer readable medium having stored therein computer readable instructions that, in response to execution by a system, cause the system to perform operations comprising:

- identifying one or more computer files comprising software code;
- obtaining one or more test signatures by reading partial sections of the software code;
- obtaining a steganographic signature by reading executable code comprising part of a steganographic program including software calls that introduce steganographic items into the one or more computer files;
- comparing the steganographic signature with the one or more test signatures, wherein the steganographic program is excluded from said comparing; and
- in response to said comparing, ~~identifying~~ displaying a listing of which of the one or more computer files comprises software code that has been modified by the steganographic program.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-12, 14-20, 22, 24-28, 30-34, 36 and 37 are allowed.

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art in the field does not teach the combination of features of the claimed invention, particularly including the Applicant's steps of identifying files that have been modified by the introduction of steganographic items by a steganographic program, where the identification is accomplished by obtaining steganographic signatures of partial segments of the software code and comparison with test signatures, all in the manner of the Applicant as set forth in his disclosure.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul E. Callahan whose telephone number is (571) 272-3869. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 9 to 5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Eleni Shiferaw, can be reached on (571) 272-3867. The

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fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is: (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/PEC/
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/Eleni A Shiferaw/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2437